

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BRUSSE 07471 211801Z

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 SIL-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07

INR-07 LAB-04 NSAE-00 DODE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01

SP-02 /052 W

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R 211707Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4719

INFO AMEMBASSY BERN

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION GENEVA

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PLAB

SUBJECT: AFL-CIO INVITATIONS TO EUROPEAN LABOR LEADERS

REF: A. STATE 169526; B. PARIS 21370

1. ICTFU SEC GEN OTTO KERSTEN, DURING LONG-REQUESTED CALL
AUGUST 21, GAVE EMBOFF HIS VIEWS ON AFL-CIO INVITATION TO
EUROPEAN LABOR LEADERS WHICH CLOSELY PARALLEL THOSE REPORTED
FROM PARIS IN REF B. KERSTEN SAID HE WILL BE GOING TO WASHINGTON
SEPTEMBER 2 FROM BRITISH TUC CONGRESS IN BLACKPOOL TO
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PAGE 02 BRUSSE 07471 211801Z

ATTEND WORLD BANK MEETING. HE INDICATED HE WILL HAVE MEETING

WITH AFL-CIO PRESIDENT MEANY DURING THAT WEEK AT WHICH TIME HE EXPECTS DISCUSS INVITATION QUESTION.

2. KERSTEN POINTED OUT TWO PROBLEMS IN HOLDING SUCH MEETING FOLLOWING ICTFU CONGRESS: FIRST, POSSIBLE MISINTERPRETATION BY ICTFU AFFILIATES IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES THAT WESTERN EUROPEAN LEADERS AGREED HOLD IMPORTANT MEETING IN WASHINGTON WITH AFL-CIO AFTER CONFERRING WITH "THIRD WORLD" UNIONS IN MEXICO. SECOND, TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE FOR MANY EUROPEAN DELEGATIONS UNDER INTERNATIONAL TOURIST SPECIAL FARE THROUGH SABENA AND KLM WHICH CALLS FOR TRAVEL TO MEXICO AND RETURN VIA MONTREAL WITH NO STOPOVER POSSIBLE IN US. KERSTEN ALSO SAID SOME EUROPEAN LEADERS AND SPECIFICALLY CITED GERMAN DGB WANT CLOSE BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH AFL-CIO, BUT WANT TO AVOID MULTILATERAL MEETING WITH US UNION WHICH COULD BE INTERPRETED AS WEAKENING OF ICFTU TIES. KERSTEN ALSO SAID NEXT OPPORTUNITY FOR CONSULTATION AMONG EUROPEAN LEADERS WOULD BE AUSTRIAN TRADE UNION CONGRESS SEPTEMBER 15 WHICH IS WHY HE WANTS TO HAVE MEETING WITH MEANY PRIOR TO THAT DATE.

3. EMBOFF INFORMED BY BELGIAN FGTB THAT SEC GEN GEORGES DEBUNNE HAS BEEN ON LEAVE SINCE MEANY INVITATION RECEIVED. HIS OFFICE SENT INTERIM REPLY TO THIS EFFECT. DEBUNNE RETURNS TO OFFICE AUGUST 25 AND WILL GIVE ATTENTION TO INVITATION DURING THAT WEEK.

3. COMMENT: IT POSSIBLE THAT DEBUNNE WILL DEFER RESPONDING TO MEANY INVITATION UNTIL KERSTEN RETURNS FROM US OR UNTIL AFTER EUROPEAN CONSULTATIONS IN AUSTRIA. EMBASSY BRUSSELS FULLY SUPPORTS COMMENT EXPRESSED IN PARIS REFTEL.RENNER

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